

Message Text

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SUBJECT: AID PROJECT PROMPTS DIALOGUE ON HAITIAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

THE INFLUENTIAL HAITIAN DAILY "LE MATIN"
CALLED JULY 17 FOR A NATIONAL DIALOGUE TO
ACHIEVE A COORDINATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORT
WHICH RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF SMALL FARMERS.
THE PAPER SAID THIS WAS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO MAKE
THE MOST EFFICIENT USE OF \$7.4 MILLION IN USAID
ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE 940 KILOMETERS OF RURAL
AGRICULTURAL FEEDER ROADS.

AT THE JUNE 29 SIGNING CEREMONY FOR THE AID-
SUPPORTED PROJECT, OBSERVED LE MATIN, AMBASSADOR
ISHAM LEFT US WITH THE IMPRESSION OF A DIPLOMATI
"WHO IS WHOLLY DEVOTED TO THE STUDY OF THE REAL
NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY, AND HE PLACES THESE NEEDS IN
OUR PROVINCES AND OUR COUNTRYSIDE." THE PAPER
WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE UNUSED POTENTIAL OF THE RURAL
WORK FORCE MENTIONED BY THE AMBASSADOR "LIES IN THE
HARVESTS WHICH ROT IN HUTS, SOILS, AND WAREHOUSES...
BECAUSE THE PEASANT LACKS EASY ACCESS TO MAJOR
NATIONAL HIGHWAYS."

SMALL FARMERS, NOTED LE MATIN, "ARE A WORK FORCE WHICH
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THE PUBLIC POWERS SHOULD ENCOURAGE AND EVEN PROTECT AND

DEFEND SO THAT THEY CAN PRODUCE THE MAXIMUM POSSIBLE FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF RURAL AND URBAN LIVING CONDITIONS, THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AND AN INCREASE IN INDIVIDUAL INCOME." THE PAPER PROPOSED, THEREFORE, "THAT THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE UNDERTAKE AND MAINTAIN A DIALOGUE LEADING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NEEDS OF OUR FARMING REGIONS." REGIONAL SPECIALISTS, ACCORDING TO THE PROPOSAL, COULD DESIGNATE AREAS MOST LIKELY TO BENEFIT IMMEDIATELY FROM RURAL ROAD IMPROVEMENTS. THE DIALOGUE WOULD ALSO INVOLVE THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS, THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND DEFENSE, AND OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.

THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR, OBSERVED LE MATIN, RIGHTLY PLACES THE EMPHASIS ON IMPROVING THE RURAL ECONOMY AS A MEANS TO RAISE NATIONAL LIVING STANDARDS, AN ATTITUDE SHARED BY THE HAITIAN GOVERNMENT. AMBASSADOR ISHAM'S PRAISE FOR THE PERSEVERANCE, COURAGE AND LOVE FOR THE SOIL CHARACTERIZING THE HAITIAN PEASANT, NOTED LE MATIN, "PLACES THE USAID ASSISTANCE ON THE HORIZON OF PROMISE, OF HOPE AND EVEN OF CERTITUDE FOR THE FUTURE."
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